

**CHINESE COMMUNIST SHIPPING TO SIHANOUKVILLE  
AND THE USE OF CAMBODIA AS A SOURCE OF  
SUPPLIES FOR THE VIET CONG**

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1. Communist-flag shipping accounts for only a small share of total shipping calling at the port of Sihanoukville. In 1964 Communist flag ships accounted for only 13 of the 237 ship arrivals at Sihanoukville. Chinese Communist ships have made 14 calls at Sihanoukville since the Chinese Communists began seaborne deliveries of military equipment to Cambodia in January 1964

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Seven of these calls were made in 1964 and seven have been made so far in 1965.

Eleven of the 14 arrivals are suspected to have carried military equipment, principally small arms and ammunition, but the evidence on about half of these calls is not conclusive.

2. Since October 1964 the military cargoes delivered by Chinese Communist ships have probably been in fulfillment of the Chinese Communist military aid agreements with Cambodia, which calls for sufficient equipment, arms, and ammunition to equip 27,000 men.

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Army review(s) completed.

It seems unlikely that any significant amount of this equipment or ammunition has been supplied to the Viet Cong, although some of the replaced equipment may have been turned over to them.

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3. The extent to which Cambodia is used as a way station in the logistics system serving Communist forces in South Vietnam was thoroughly debated during the preparation of the USIB Memorandum, Infiltration and Logistics -- South Vietnam, 28 October 1965, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] This memorandum concluded that some supplies for the Communist forces enter South Vietnam from Cambodia. Most of these supplies are either indigenous to Cambodia or arrive through normal trade channels, although some supplies probably do move in clandestine channels. The memorandum further concluded that it was not possible to determine the quantity of supplies moving from Cambodia; however, the evidence that exists leads to the conclusion that the tonnages are significantly less than the tonnages moving through Laos (that is, at least 5 tons and possibly more than 8 tons per day thus far in 1965).

4. No information has been received at Headquarters since October that would appear to change these conclusions. MACV has recently reported, however, that at least 25 tons per day is moving into South Vietnam from Cambodia. We do not know the basis of the MACV estimate or indeed if it refers to actual movement or to capabilities.

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5. Most of the supplies procured in or through Cambodia have generally consisted of materials that can be purchased on the open market, including food, drugs and medical supplies, and electrical equipment such as radios, batteries and tubes. Although some of these supplies are purchased in Cambodia and infiltrated into South Vietnam, the major source of these supplies for the Viet Cong is South Vietnam itself. The extent to which Cambodia is being used as a transfer area or as a source of arms and ammunition is difficult to assess. Various reports have indicated [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] that arms and ammunition have moved from Cambodia to South Vietnam. Evidence, including the testimony of numerous Viet Cong prisoners who were engaged in supply operations from Cambodia, indicates that such movements probably are small in terms of the total amount of such materials infiltrated into South Vietnam.

6. Intelligence indicates that supplies have been moved from Cambodia into South Vietnam by the following routes and methods:

- a) by sampan or junk on the inland waterways;
- b) by porters on the trails that approach or cross the South Vietnamese border; and
- c) by sampan or junk from Cambodian ports to islands in the Gulf of Siam and to the west coast of South Vietnam. A substantial open but illegal trade has also taken place between South Vietnam and Cambodia, especially in the Mekong Delta. Many points along the

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border between Cambodia and South Vietnam have been identified as Viet Cong border crossings; Tay Ninh and Chau Doc have been the two provinces most often cited. The relative importance of each area, route, or mode cannot be determined from available information. It appears, however, that the Viet Cong have shifted back and forth from land to water transport and from one area of entry to another as the need and tactical situation has changed.

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Press reports

out of Saigon have mentioned trucks moving supplies from Cambodia on route 19 to the PAVN forces in the area around the Kontum and Pleiku Provinces in South Vietnam. These reports have not been confirmed by on the spot investigations made by Western officials and newsmen. There is no evidence to indicate that an organized logistics system employing trucks such as that in Laos is operating in Cambodia.

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7. The USIB Memorandum also concluded that the Viet Cong use of Cambodian territory is due to active Cambodian cooperation in some areas, a laissez-faire attitude in others, and the inability or failure of the Cambodian government to control or even patrol its frontiers. The Cambodian government has taken an attitude increasingly favorable to the Communists in the Vietnamese situation, but has stopped short of military support.

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On 7 December the Cambodian

Foreign Minister invited the Chairman of the ICC to conduct "strict control" over the port of Sihanoukville so as to investigate charges that arms for the Viet Cong are moving through the port.

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